The
Niagara Advance

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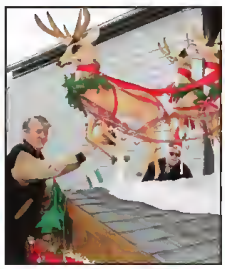
Thursday, December 10, 2015



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Bridge tips from local club

get it online
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Generosity evident at best stroll yet

It was the best-attended Candlelight Stroll in its history, with strollers turning out to enjoy the music, generously support a bursary to help a child attend the not-for-profit Royal Oak Community School, and donate so much food for Newark Neighbours that several truck-loads were required to cart it away. For story please see pages 8 and 9.
Photo by Fred Mercnik, special to the Advance

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Newark prepared to help needy at Christmas

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Egon and Marianne Epp arrived with at Newark Neighbours recently with a load of trains, cars, trucks, doll high chairs and cradles - their annual donation to children in need at Christmas.

The toys were made by Egon, at the urging of his wife.

When he retired, she suggested he keep busy, and woodworking was his hobby.

He began by building beautiful wooden toys for their grandchildren, but then they grew up too quickly. So he kept building, and donated the toys to Newark Neighbours for needy children.

Nonperishable food donations and toys are collected every year to feed more than 40 local families at Christmas. Money raised in Newark's retail thrift shop goes toward buying meat and vegetables for Christmas dinner, as well as gifts for families in need.

Newark's food shelves are well-stocked, and what they don't have they will be able to buy, says volunteer Bonnie Turner.

It's looking like they may have more families than in recent years - situations have changed, she said, and more people are finding themselves on hard times. Some are on disability, some are out of work - last week, she said, they had four new people come for help.

That's a lot for a food bank that generally has about 35 families relying on it for assistance.

However, they don't have the number of families with children they have had in previous years, so they don't need a lot of toys - although they can always use gift certificates for teens, she said, and toiletries such as shampoo, tooth brushes and toothpaste.

The generosity of the community at this time of year, she added, "is just amazing. Our community is wonderful."

Schools and churches help out, the Chamber of Commerce Candlelight Stroll collects food, as does NOTL Hydro during the Christmas Parade.

The amount of food and gifts they received from the stroll this year "was amazing," said Turner.

"We've never had anywhere near that much food from the stroll."

Families who need help at Christmas must register at Newark, and provide proof of income.

For more information call 905-468-3519, or visit the Newark barn just off John Street. Turn in at the Riverbend Inn driveway and keep to the right, following the Newark Neighbours sign to the yellow barn.

The barn will be closed to shoppers and drop-offs until the new year.

Marianne and Egon Epp drop off hand-made wooden toys for needy children at Newark Neighbours, as they have every year for the past decade.

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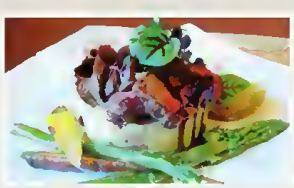

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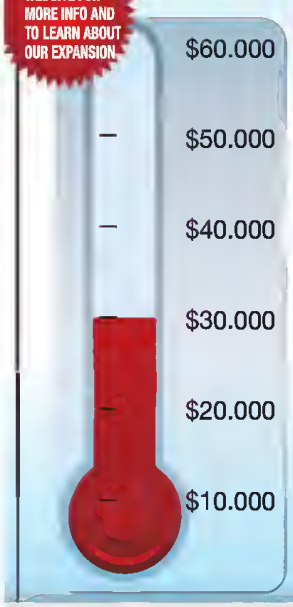

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Santa to visit Old Town for 51st annual parade

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Santa's sleigh is ready, spruced up and looking better than ever for his trip through the streets of the Old Town Saturday.

He'll make his appearance in one of the largest Christmas parades in Canada, says parade spokesman Bob Cheriton, attended by thousands of people from across the region.

"With the popularity of our parade and a warm weather outlook, people will want to make sure that they get out early and get the perfect spot because this year's parade promises to be the best ever," he added.

The parade committee invited the Virgil Business Association to be Grand Marshall, "in recognition of its exceptional contributions to our community. Since its inception, the VBA has raised more than a million dollars for area projects ranging from the construction of the first arena to the recent splash pad," said Cheriton.

The VBA is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Virgil Stampede, its major fundraising event.

A parade just wouldn't be a parade without music and this year there will be great bands to create the sounds of the season. These include the E.L. Crossley Marching Band, the MM Robinson Drumline, the Memorial Military Drum Corp, the Top Hat Marching Band, the Ridley Cadet Corp, the York Lions Steel Band and the incredible Burlington Teen Tour Band, said Cheriton. And providing some new sounds to the parade this year will be the Streetsville Pipes and Drums.

With more than 100 entries, the parade will also feature floats put together by many local schools, businesses and attractions. New participants this year include the Niagara Roller Girls, Royal Oak Community School and the Yellow Door Theatre Project.

Animals are always a big part of the parade and this year is no exception. People will see horses, dogs, and even alpacas riding on the Minor Bros. float, said Cheriton.

In keeping with the spirit of the season, the entry from Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro will feature a food drive for Newark Neighbours.

Also, the Fulton Fitness "Surfing Santa" will be collecting socks and donations for thee Out of the Cold Program.

As always, representatives of Canada Post will be on hand to accept last minute letters for Santa - they remind you that the correct address for Santa is Santa Claus, North Pole, Canada HOH OHO. Also, please be sure that return addresses are clearly marked so that the elves can be sure that replies get to the right place.

Bruce Pospiech, John Fryer and Bob Cheriton touch up Santa's sleigh in preparation for the arrival of Santa himself with his reindeer during the NOTL Christmas Parade Saturday.

The parade will start at 11 a.m. at King and Centre Street. It will then weave its way through town to join Queen Street at Simcoe. The parade will finish at the Cenotaph.

This will be the 51st year that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Christmas Parade has been presented by a group of community volunteers. The parade is made possible by the generous support of individuals and businesses that donate funds each year as well as the outstanding effort of a large group of volunteers, said Cheriton.

Funds are also generated through the sale of commemorative buttons, with this year's design created by renowned local artist, Angie Strauss.

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Draft of updated official plan presented to public

Suzanne Mason
Special to the Advance

The first draft of an updated official plan for Niagara-on-the Lake that will replace the 1994 blueprint was presented to town councillors and the public for input Monday.

The town began the review process three years ago and hired consulting firm MHBC last April to write the first draft. It addresses a number of issues that have arisen over the past 21 years including enhanced heritage policies, tree protection, stronger agricultural regulations, affordable housing for families, transportation and community improvement areas.

During that time, there have been several amendments to the plan dealing with issues such as regulations for country inns, villas and cottage rentals and local policy requirements in the Queenston, Glendale and Dock Area secondary plans.

"However, In many respects, the current official plan does not conform with recent provincial legislation and does not reflect the character, needs and aspirations identified by the community..." staff reported.

"The new plan... (will) provide for high quality urban design, conservation of the town's heritage and culture ... and provision of amenities, businesses and housing that attract new families and people of all ages to live in the community."

The public will have more opportunities to comment on the document over the next five months at open houses and public meetings.

Council is expected to adopt a new official plan in June.

The document is on the town's website and copies are available at the town hall, the library on Anderson Lane and at the Queenston Community Centre.

The community and advisory development committee voted to approve the draft document following a public meeting attended by about 60 residents at the Court House.

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Visit www.olivtastingroom.com for more about OLiV.

Humane society suit settled

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has settled a law suit with the Lincoln County Humane Society, avoiding a day in court.

The humane society was seeking $25,000 from the Town and was expecting the case to be heard in small claims court last Thursday.

The agreement was reached Wednesday afternoon, with details remaining confidential.

The dispute goes back to 2012, when Kevin Strooband, director of the humane society, alleged he continued to provide services to the town, such as taking in stray dogs, without a signed agreement, on the understanding the town would payfor those services as it had for the last two decades.

Unable to collect payment, Strooband eventually appeared at a town council meeting when he was told the town didn't owe the humane society anything.

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Jillian Ali

Lancaster, Brooks & Welch is pleased to announce that Jillian Ali has joined the firm as an Associate in our Corporate and Commercial group effective January 4, 2016. In addition to her focus on corporate and commercial law, Jillian has a Master of Laws with attention to intellectual property and alternative dispute resolution. A native of Niagara she is pleased to serve the legal needs of the business community in our region. Jillian may be contacted for legal advice at jali@lbwlawyers.com.

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Town CAO leaving NOTL to take job in Caledon

Suzanne Mason
Special to the Advance

The chief administrative officer for the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is leaving next month for a job in a larger municipality in the Peel Region.

Mike Galloway, who has been the town's CAO for five years, has accepted a position in Caledon.

The growing city is part of the Greater Toronto Area with a population nearing 100,000.

"It's a good opportunity with a lot of challenges," said Galloway after the committee of the whole meeting held at the Court House Monday.

He said be has had a good working relationship with three mayors and councils in Niagara-on-the-Lake during his tenure and called the staff "exceptional".

Involvement in the development of large-scale projects like the $200 million outlet mall in Glendale and the production of annual reports to create more transparency for the public were two of the highlights for Galloway.

He said he is also pleased that he and his staff brought in annual budgets with tax rates well below the rate of inflation and at the same time, the town's reserve funds have continued to grow.

Galloway said he expects similar challenges regarding business and residential developments, but on a much bigger scale in Caledon.

There is no set date yet for Galloway's departure, but it will be sometime in January.

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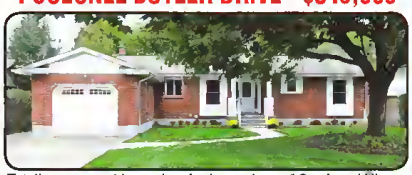

Totally renovated bungalow in the enclave of Garrison Village. Close to all that the Niagara Lifestyle has to offer. This home features new landscaping and is wired with new Fibre cable for all your toys! A perfect house to call home.
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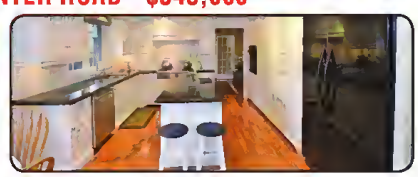

Overlooking farm lands & backing onto a meandering stream, this very well maintained and updated 4 bedroom, 4 bath ranch bungalow offers all of the benefits of rural Niagara Country Living yet only minutes to in-town conveniences. This may be the ideal, family friendly setting for which you have been looking-come on home!
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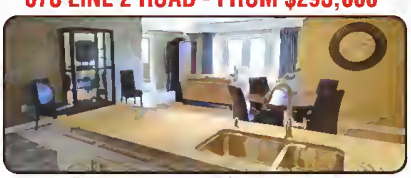
678 LINE 2 ROAD - FROM $295,000



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The Niagara Advance

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Point of View

'Tis the season

We are very fortunate to live and work in one of the most beautiful towns in Canada - and not just in the summer.

Strolling through the streets of our Old Town, decorated for the festive season, will remind us that Niagara-in-the-Lake is beautiful all year round.

We are also surrounded by evidence of the generosity of our residents, possibly because it's hard not to feel grateful and want to help out those less fortunate.

There are individuals and families in our own community, and in even greater numbers in the cities that share our borders, who find themselves in need, especially at this time of year.

And there are service organizations, students, churches parishes and businesses remembering the importance of giving - the signs of are everywhere.

At various locations around town, food, clothing and gifts are piling up to be distributed to those in need.

The dedicated volunteers at Newark Neighbours are carrying on a 40-year tradition, helping families with food and toys so that nobody, especially children, goes without.

The generosity of our community is never so evident as at Christmas, and the results of the Candlelight Stroll, for both Newark Neighbours and to help fund an education bursary, are further proof.

Concerts and benefits abound, helping those organizations that are tasked with helping the less fortunate.

And these are just the visible examples of generosity. There are people quietly lending a helping hand out of the public eye - we may never know about their kindness, but the recipients will.

So, to all those who are showing us once again how very fortunate we are to be part of such a loving, caring community, thank you.

We all have a wonderful opportunity to see the spirit of Christmas in action, to be part of it if we choose, and even better, to carry it with us all year round.

New members welcome to Writers Circle

NOTL Writers Circle recently heard a panel discussion on History Matters from writers Richard Merritt, Jean Baxter and Randy Klaassen. All writers are welcome to the bi-monthly meetings, 2 p.m. on Sundays at the NOTL Public Library. See the web site www.notlwriterscircle.com/ for more information.

letters to the editor

Letter from Santa

Dear parents,

Santa Claus is coming to town this Saturday, Dec 12.

He needs a favour. Santa would like to acknowledge as many children as he can by name.

If you could stand behind your children with a nice legible sign showing the names of the children then Santa has a better chance of calling them by name.

Merry Christmas

Santa

Thankful for daughter's aid

I would like thank the person who came to my daughter's aid after she had been in a car accident at Creek Rd. and Line 3 on Sunday, Dec. 6.

He assisted her in making that frightening phone call that we parents never want to get. All NOTL emergency services were excellent as always. It's a testament to the community we live in.

We are thankful that all walked away from that scene.

Ed McIlroy, Queenston

Thanks for help at Christmas

Bonnie Turner
Newark Neighbours

Greetings from the volunteers at the "Barn".

We are busy getting the Christmas program up and running.

Over the past few weeks we have seen an increase in groups and individuals bringing in donations of food and money. The community is always so willing to help out the less fortunate at this time of year and we thank all and everyone who contributes to the continuing success of Newark Neighbours and the food bank.

Mr D. Laird has given us turkeys for the dinner boxes we make up for our food bank recipients. St. Savior's Church in Queenston collected food from their parishioners. St. Vincent de Paul collected food at their craft sale and it was delivered to us by Joanne Mattei. We had a food and candy donation from the Mu Pi chapter of Beta Sigma Phi delivered by Valerie Tomkies. Jacqueline Barne made a food donation as well.

It would not be Christmas at Newark without the marvelous handmade wooden toys from Mr Egon Epp and his wife.

We will have lots more thank yous to deliver over the next few weeks so stay tuned. Be safe and happy

We are closing for shopping 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11 and will reopen at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 4. Residents in need can contact us at the barn at 905-468-3519 for more information, or visit us on John Street - turn into the Riverbend Inn driveway and then turn right when you see our little sign.

Bonnie Turner is a volunteer for Newark Neighbours.

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OUR LETTERS POLICY

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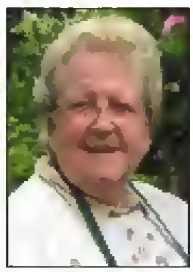
Only your name and the city/town where you live will be published.
Please keep your comments to a maximum of 500 words.
Submit your letters via e-mail to: penny.coles@sunmedia.ca

Opinion

Parade brings memories of laughter and good fun



Jean Cochrane
Happy Gardening

Christmas is my favourite time of year, yes, even with the shopping.

Even during the war back in Scotland, when we seldom got snow, it was a special time with the possibility of an apple or an orange (never both) in the toe of your stocking, and the mail service so speedy that the relatives who had a farm in Ireland would mail a freshly killed chicken and it arrived fresh to be cooked for Christmas dinner.

There is a feeling in the air and for me it is more about giving than getting.

I have never been rich so there were no dreams of showering everyone with gifts, but what I and many others bave done is give the gift of our time. The rewards for us - the fact that we have made life a little bit better for someone else.

We are about to enjoy another Christmas parade and it is all thanks to volunteers. It was only when I helped make a float for our Sunday School that I realized just how much work was involved. There was the stable and manger which my husband made from old barn boards. I created the animals - ox and ass and then we added our real live people, Mary and Joseph, shepherds and angels, all warmly clad under the costumes.

The congregation was invited to follow along, clad as desert nomads - you never saw such a selection of bathrobes. We even had the three kings on horse-back. Their costumes were fantastic and designing suitable head-dresses that had to go over safety helmets was quite a challenge.

Because our unit included borses we had to bave a 'pooper-scooper' we had a brave volunteer (in costume) complete with wheelbarrow and shovel.

So off we go, but we did not get far, one of the horses would not pass a drum corp band - so he had to go home in case he caused an accident, slight change to our story - we now had only two kings.

We were nearing the main street when a fight broke out among the angels - desert nomads to the rescue - but the shepherds were joining in - peace was restored then a shout went up: "watch your feet!" The pooper scoopers for the horses ahead of us had missed some. And that is how it went, we waved to friends, kept the children happy, and laughed a lot. I don't remember ever being so warm on a bitterly cold day.

So where ever you are, watching a Santa parade - whether it is on national TV or your home town, just remember that hundreds of volunteers are wishing you a very Merry Christmas.

Their reward? The smiles on the faces of children of all ages.

Reflections for Christmas amidst fear and violence

Randy Klaassen
Senior's View

With all the violence of mass shootings occurring around the world, it certainly puts a cloud of dread and fear upon preparations to celebrate Christmas.

Seems the ideal image of a backyard barn, filled with a few animals, being the quiet place for the night, where a young woman gives birth to her first born, has been shattered.

While Mary and Joseph of the Christmas story sought a quiet place for lodging that night long ago, we bave to remember they were living a 'refugee' like existence, far from home.

Their quiet seclusion in a Bethlehem suburb was short lived. Like refugees of today, it was shortly after the birth of their son when they had to flee for their lives to a distant foreign country.

I was at a meeting recently where it was described that currently there are some 60 million displaced people in the world, which is the highest number since the Second World War.

In perspective that would be like close to twice the population of Canada leaving the country to find shelter elsewhere in the world.

While there is an exodus from many of the worlds 'hot spots,' the current largest evacuation is from Syria, most fleeing to either Turkey or Lebanon.

Another perspective shared is the current situation in Lebanon, where one in four people is a displaced person. That would be the equivalent of Canada accepting close to nine million refugees from a variety of countries.

Use your imagination to figure out how we might deal with that challenge.

Yet the big story from Lebanon is wbat is not bappening. While there is violence occurring among people in Lebanon, it is not the level one might expect in such dire circumstances.

One effort to reduce violence is organizations working hard to help people understand each other. "Peace-building" between people of different backgrounds is how I heard it described.

"To do this you have to help people describe what gives them hope," said a worker from Lebanon. "Having hope allows people to envision a purpose, and thereby see roadblocks as challenges to overcome."

Another factor to reduce violence in Lebanon is for government and various agencies to provide displaced children with educational opportunities.

I heard it described that when children face despair, growing up with nothing to hope for, they become vulnerable to others who use them for violent means. Education provides them with anticipation for a better future.

Reality for most of us as Canadians is being in this country due to immigration; and for many of us the cause of immigration was related to being displaced by violence or economics. With having been granted the opportunities we share as Canadians comes responsibility for others.

The current focus on displaced people from Syria is for us an opportunity.

Opportunity to provide immediate relief by accepting refugees, and opportunities to once again become a world leader in peace-keeping by supporting efforts to reduce violence in the Middle-East.

Recently I also heard a quote by German theologian Jürgen Moltmann, who said, "Hope is the anticipation of joy, as fear is the anticipation of terror."

The Christmas season calls me to focus on hope, rather than fear.

That's my view.

This year's Candlelight Stroll, organized by the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, was the best-attended yet, with more than 12,000 people joining in to walk through the decorated streets of the Old Town to the sounds of Christmas music.
Photo by Fred Mercnik/Special to the Advance

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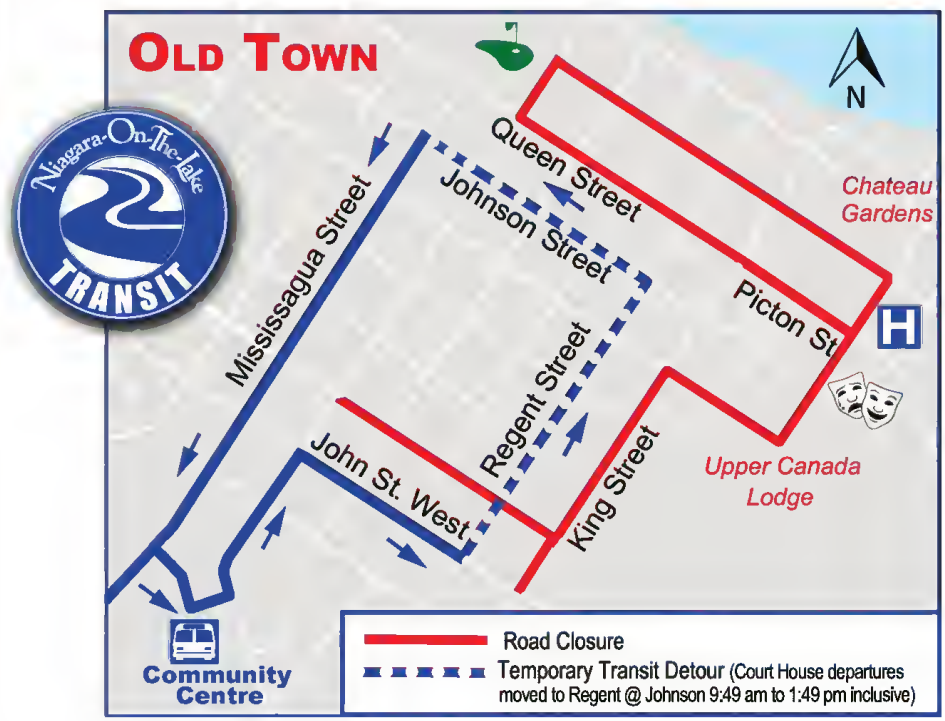
TEMPORARY TRANSIT BUS DETOUR
Saturday, December 12, 2015

To accommodate the Niagara-on-the-Lake Christmas Parade, NOTL Transit will be rerouting buses in the Old Town as shown on the attached map.

This detour will commence on Saturday, December 12, 2015, with the 9:42 a.m. departure from the Community Centre. Regular service will resume with the 2:42 p.m. departure from the Community Centre on the same day.

Please call 905-468-3266 for more information if required.



Donations at the annual Candlelight Stroll were extremely generous, both in food to Newark Neighbours and to help provide a bursary for a student whose family otherwise couldn't afford the alternative education at the not-for-profit Royal Oak Community School, said Janice Thomson, executive director of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce. There were plenty of young folk out to attend this year's stroll, and to enjoy the music, including the choir singing from the steps of Grace United Church.

Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Residents are reminded that during winter weather conditions, pushing or blowing snow and ice onto or across public roadways creates an unsafe situation for drivers and is subject to penalty under Section 181 of the Highway Traffic Act.

Leaving vehicles parked or standing on a roadway in such a manner as to interfere with the movement of traffic or clearing of snow from the roadway also creates an unsafe situation and is likewise subject to penalty. If snow is expected, please do not park your vehicle on the roadway until snow plowing operations are complete and the roadways are clear.

To ensure the safe passage of traffic and to prevent interference with snow clearing operations, Town Enforcement staff will be issuing parking violation tickets for any vehicles found parked on public streets in Niagara on-the Lake in such a manner as to interfere with the movement of traffic or the clearing of snow from the highway in contravention of Traffic and Parking By-law 4308-09 or in contravention of the Highway Traffic Act.

We also ask parents to remind their children to be aware of the additional hazards associated with plowing operations and traffic during winter driving conditions.

Please consider the safety of other road users. Thank you for being a good neighbour.

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Town to give out $108,000 in grants next year

Suzanne Mason
Special to the Advance

Seventeen organizations and events in Niagara-on-the-Lake are expected to receive discretionary grants in the town's 2016 budget totaling just over $108,000.

The Shaw Festival and the Icewine Festival were awarded the largest amounts at $30,000 each with the next highest allocations going to the Friends of Fort George, the Niagara Jazz Festival and the Red Roof Retreat.

The Shaw Festival had requested a total of $50,000 to assist with their marketing plans to attract more visitors to increase tourism spending - an increase from the $25,000 awarded last year.

The chamber of commerce will receive a loan of $30,000 in addition to the grant for the Icewine Festival. The money will be used to provide programming every day in January at wineries that will include tours, tastings and events. Last year, the festival only received $1,000.

Funding for the Niagara Historical Society and Museum of $97,000 will be included in the 2016 operating budget, rather than through the discretionary grant process.

The grant budget was increased by the same amount as the Canadian Price Index of .9 per cent. To allow for emergency requests during the next fiscal year, $4,000 was left in the budget.

The corporate services advisory committee approved the allocations Monday and a final decision will be made by council next week.

Firefighter trivia night Friday

Test your knowledge at the Queenston Firefighters Trivia Night fundraising event Friday.

The Queenston Firefighters decided to host the trivia night as a change from their annual turkey roll. The cost is $10 per person and teams will be up to 10 people per table.

The cost includes a Borscbt dinner and prizes will be awarded to the top two teams.

Also, raffle tickets will be sold and drawn at the end of the night.

There are a few tables left - if you can put together a group of about 10 and then please confirm via email to joshua_fast_44@hotmail.com.

The event is Friday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. at the Queenston Firehall at Dumfries and the Niagara Parkway.

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Theatre school's first production set to open

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

A new theatre company for young people is presenting its first annual Christmas production, a new, family-friendly version of Peter Pan.

The Yellow Door Theatre Project, based in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is providing stage experience for budding actors and an opportunity for youngsters in the audience to identify with child actors performing one of their favourite stories.

Company founder Andorlie Hillstrom says her goal is to provide a structure for kids to be mentored by professionals - not just the actors but those involved in every step of the production from bottom to the top, including set design, lighting and technical direction, at a time in their lives when they're like little sponges, learning quickly and "having the most wonderful time while they're learning."

She's drawing on some veteran Shaw Festival people, including Gray Powell who will play Captain Hook, Niagara Falls actress Jenna Warriner and director Molly Atkinson, who has taught acting in several schools, including the Shaw's.

Hillstrom first saw a rehearsal of Robert Ursan's Peter Pan in Regina - he is a long-time colleague who took over her theatre school when she left Regina last year. On a trip back, she checked in to see what he was up to, and loved what she saw.

She had by then made the decision to open a theatre school in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where she and her husband had come with the intention of retiring.

They had made many "pilgrimages" here over the years, checking out the festival, and were drawn to NOTL, she said. She came with no expectation of beginning another theatre school, but once here, she was told by so many people that this was a need in the community she could fill, she began to consider the idea.

She said she thinks she was "the most surprised person of all" once the decision was made, but she feels good about undertaking one more project, one more creation she can nurture to become part of a more than two-decade legacy of inspiring young people to love the arts.

Ursan's Peter Pan, with its cast of young people, is a great choice for a Christmas family event with its lively, toe-tapping tunes, and is the perfect fit for her first production, which had to be organized with whirlwind speed, but which has come together perfectly, she said.

"It's very high-caliber piece. I'm excited to see what the kids are going to do, and I'm excited to be in this brand new space," she said, of the Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

It will be on a stage that is the perfect size for kids, with a light, bright and airy set that is both simple and gorgeous, designed by Erin Gerovsky.

See Page 13

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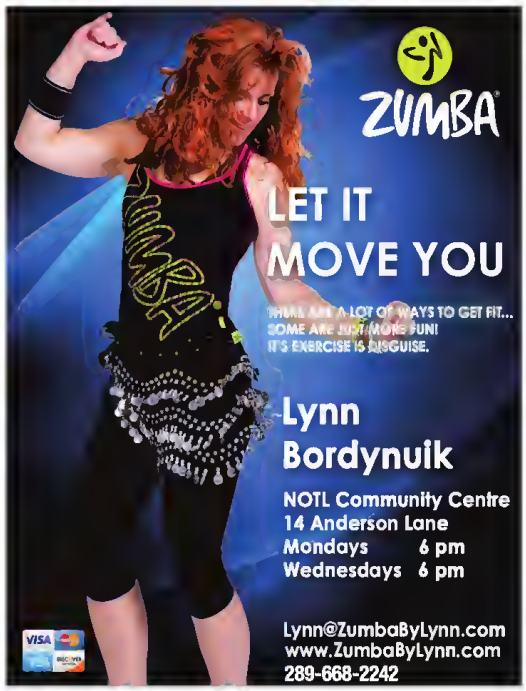

'Developing good citizens'

From Page 12

There are 26 youngsters in the production - the youngest is six-year-old Holden Powell, son of Gray Powell and director Mollie Atkinson. The kids come from across the region, said Hillstrom.

Peter Pan will be performed by a very talented 14-year-old from Niagara Falls, Aiden Tye, who is an experienced actor - he's appeared at the Shaw in two productions, said Hillstrom. During the auditions, "be just blew our socks off," she says.

"He is absolutely great, with an outstanding voice. Children will be readily able to identify with Peter Pan."

The children, both on stage and in the audience, will have the opportunity to develop a love of the theatre - some of whom will decide to pursue it as a career, others who will continue to enjoy that love of the arts throughout their lives and pass it on to their families.

And in addition, she said, "we're building good citizens - that's what I'm most proud of."

The show runs Dec. 15 to 20 at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

Tickets can be purchased at www.firstontariopac.ca.

Using a classroom at the old Virgil Public School, Aiden Tye as Peter Pan and Holden Powell as Michael rehearse for the Yellow Door Theatre Project's Peter Pan.

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Historic photo stolen from local collector

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Jim Smith, a collector of photographs, has had one of his most precious stolen.

Smith was born in the Cottage Hospital on Queen Street, and grew up just around the corner, behind the Stage Coach.

He has a love of history and a huge interest in the town where he grew up, and loves to collect photos of the Old Town. He has a collection of thousands, and shares them by email and Facebook with his friends who have the same memories of growing up in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He is considered an unofficial historian of the town, has had his photos reproduced in several books about local history, and is a regular contributor to Classic Niagara-on-the-Lake, a Facebook page that attracts attention from NOTL natives.

About a month ago, his workshop behind his house was broken in to, and several items stolen.

One of the items was a photo from 1910 of the volunteer firemen, including his great-grandfather.

It's a large print, about 24 inches by 36 inches, he said.

Smith's grandfather and father were also volunteer firefighters, and he says while he hasn't been able to confirm it, he thinks his great-great grandfather was as well.

The fire department photo board was an important heirloom to the whole family, said Smith.

"I always felt exceptionally fortunate to be the one who had it in my possession."

It was in a heavy oak frame behind glass, and there was a wooden panel on the back of it that had Smith's family tree written on it in pen, he said.

Also stolen was a print of the famous Blue Boy painting by Gainsborough, in a frame that was about 20" by 30", and about 150 years old, he said.

He also lost a 1955 dial telephone - one in working order, that he was using.

"It was a beauty," he said.

A 1940s blow torch, well-used but in good condition, was also stolen, he said.

The break-in was reported to the police, but he hasn't heard anything more and doesn't expect they'll be able to find his stolen items.

He hopes people in town who understand the importance of the fire department photo to him will watch for it on ebay and other internet sites - many other long-time residents have ancestors who are in the photo and would like to see it returned, he said.

If anyone sees or bears about the photo's whereabouts, they can reach Smith at 905-468-3062.

Jim Smith, a collector of historical photographs from Niagara-on-the-Lake, has had his 1910 print of the volunteer firefighters stolen. The photo includes his great-grandfather. He hopes people will keep a look-out for it and let him know if they see it advertised online for sale.

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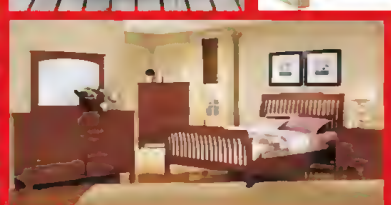

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Thomson reappointed NPC chair

Ray Spiteri
Special to the Advance

At her home, Janice Thomson has a photo of herself, at 10 years of age, in front of the Floral Clock with family visiting from Scotland.

She looks at that photo often, saying she feels honoured to be chairwoman of Niagara Parks Commission, which maintains the Ontario shoreline of the Niagara River between Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.

"It's 56 kilometres of something that is absolutely irreplaceable," Thomson says of the recreational trail and scenic Niagara Parkway, which includes attractions, golf courses and historic sites.

"And we're responsible to maintain it. I believe the Niagara Parks Commission is such a wonderful institution."

On Nov. 15, Thomson was reappointed commission chairwoman for a second term by Michael Coteau, minister of tourism and culture.

Thomson, executive director of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, was first appointed to the commission's board of directors in June 2010 after then tourism minister Michael Chan made sweeping changes to the board in an effort to take the 130-year-old agency in a new direction.

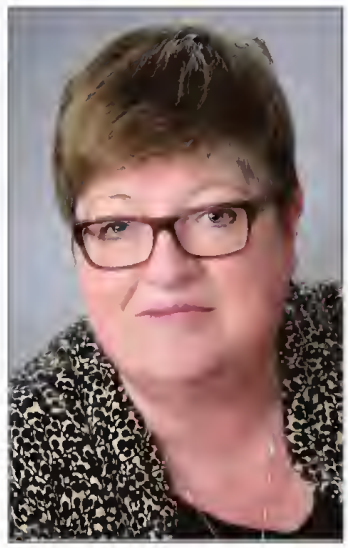
At that time, most of the existing board members were replaced. After first serving as vice-chairwoman, Thomson was named interim chair in June 2011. In November 2011, she was named the permanent chairwoman of the commission.

"I'm very honoured and pleased to have the minister's confidence," said Thomson.

"I'm also grateful to work with a great group of professional people on the board. I have worked with different commissioners with varied experiences, as well as a very caring and able staff."

Thomson said there are many accomplishments she's proud of that have taken place during her time as chairwoman.

"We've developed a strategic plan to preserve and protect (the Parks) and keep the Parks on the road to financial self sustainability."


Janice Thomson

She points to the 30-year tour-boat contract awarded to Hornblower in 2012, which is expected to make the parks commission $300 million more than it would have under its former deal with the Maid of the Mist, as a "major project."

Some other projects she deems to be successes include the WEGO bus transportation partnership with the City of Niagara Falls, a redeveloped and fully accessible incline railway, and the 125th anniversary of Journey Behind the Falls last year.

Thomson said the commission has much to look forward to in the years to come, such as the 100th anniversary of the Whirlpool Aero Car next year, the proposed marina redevelopment in Fort Erie, and plans to redevelop former power-plant buildings.

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2015 December

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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Enjoy haunting Christmas tale over pint at Silversmith

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

It's a wintry mystery about a nun in a pub, performed by a talented actress in an ivy-coloured century-old church now home to Silversmith Brewing Company.

Tara Rosling of Shaw Festival fame will give a theatrical reading of The Mistletoe Bride, a short story by Jeanette Winterson adapted by Shaw director Peter Hinton.

The story is based on a haunting British folk tale, as told through the voice of a young woman who agrees to play what turns out to be a dangerous game of hide and seek with her husband on their wedding night.

The reading is Monday, Dec. 22 at 7:30 p.m. at Silversmith Brewing Company on Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil.

Chris Pontsioen, one of the co-owners of the craft brewery, said when Rosling first approached him last year about the reading, "I had no idea what she was talking about. This was outside my experience."

But he agreed, and set aside a night for one performance.

The beer hall became so crowded so quickly they had to turn people away, and decided on the spot to hold a second reading later in the evening, he said.

When Rosling arrived, he said, she saw the crowd and wondered if they knew there was a reading - she had no idea they were there for her performance.

Rosling said she thought maybe 20 of her closest friends might show up.

"It was more like 75 of her closest friends," said Pontsioen.

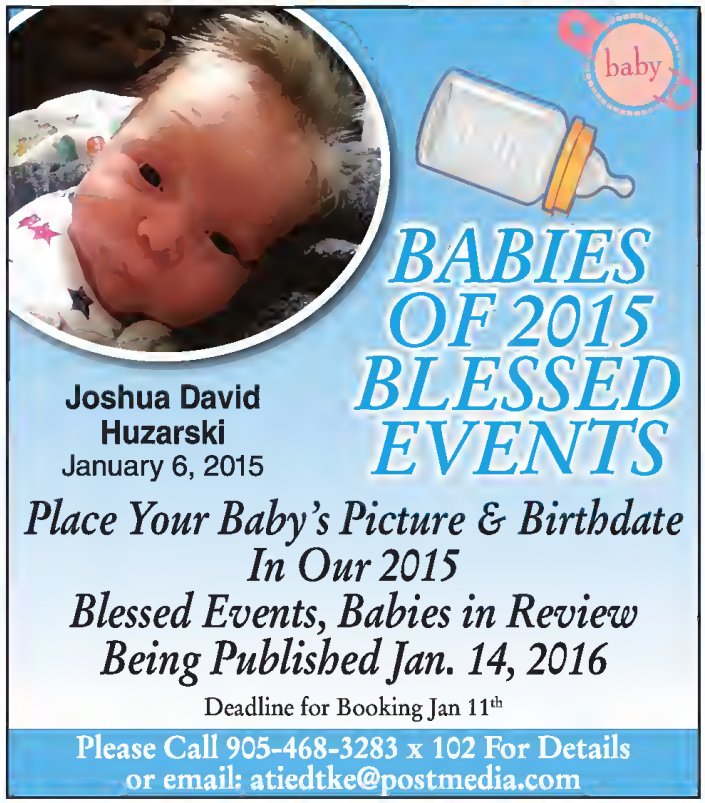
Many of them were first-time visitors to the brewery, he said.

"Once she started, the whole place became so quiet you could hear a pin drop."

He mimicked the actions of the crowd - sitting kind of relaxed to start with, moving forward to listen more intently, and finally, on the edge of their seats, not wanting to miss a word.

The atmosphere, he said, "was very cool. Everything was unplugged, with just candlelight, and lots of shadows happening," said Pontsioen.

See Page 19



Unplugged atmosphere feels like being 'transported back in time'

From Page 18

"This was a very neat space - it felt like we'd been transported back in time. It was the perfect environment for the story."

It wasn't a ticketed event - a hat was passed for donations, and $700 was given to Gillian's Place.

"It was perfect for this time of year, with all the elements of Christmas," added Hinton.

"It was a great gathering of people, with storytelling, drink, and a good charity to benefit."

Because of the second reading, the audience had to be quickly ushered out once it was over.

This year, there are two readings on separate evenings, Monday Dec. 21 and Tuesday Dec. 22, at 7:30 p.m.

This will allow for a more relaxed event, with an opportunity for the audience to remain afterward and talk with Rosling and Hinton about the performance.

As an actress, Rosling said, she was really happy to work with Hinton.

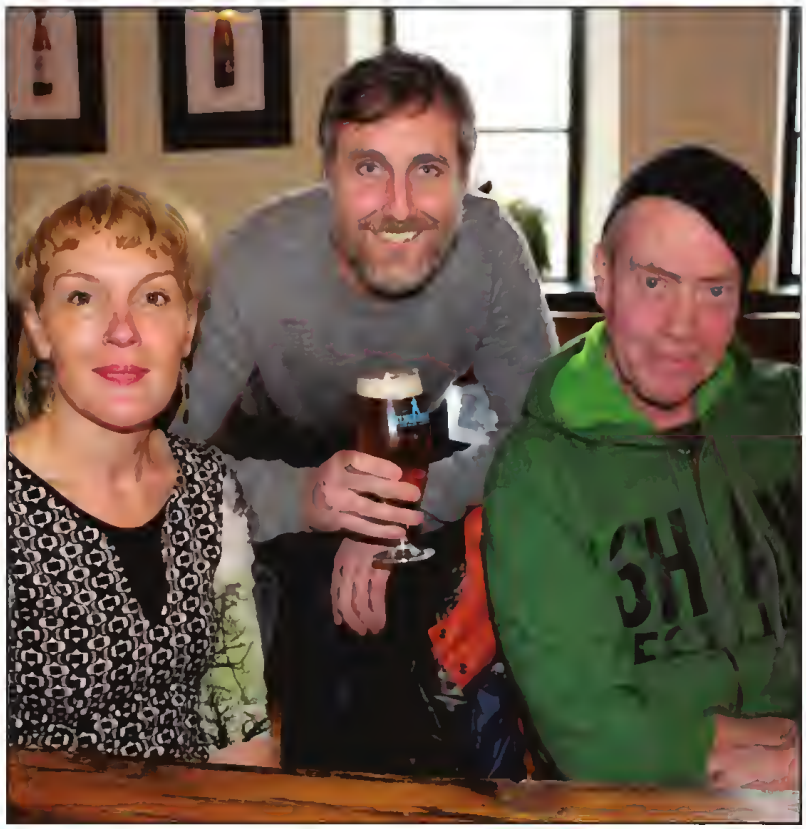
"He's a brilliant outside eye. I'm grateful for the smallest bit of direction he has to offer."

He's been able to help with advice on setting the ambience for a ghost story, and has revised the text to do things a little differently than last year, said Rosling.

"There is a great tradition of ghost stories at Christmas," said Hinton.

"There are very harrowing, dark stories of Christmas which help to remind us of a time of light and renewal."

The story, he said, is read in a bit of a monotone, "but Tara is so alive. She hardly uses the text. It's really special to see Tara here in this environment - she's one of the best actresses in Canada."



Tara Rosling will read the tale of The Mistletoe Bride, adapted by Peter Hinton, at Silversmith Brewing Company. Chris Pontsioen, co-owner of Silvermith, is happy to repeat the two readings of last year, which filled the beer hall.

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Kevin Hotte is an award-winning photographer - this one is called Harvest Winter Sleep. His work will be on display with a group of artists called Art Vision - their vision of art and life in a collaborative exhibition, at Reif Estate Winery.

Artists display variety of work at Reif Estate Winery

A group of Niagara artists are celebrating their unique visions of art and life in a collaborative exhibition at Reif Estate Winery.

Photographer Kevin Hotte and artist MABO (Matthias Bork) formed Art Vision in 2013, to exhibit their work and invite guest artists to join them.

Hotte, a highly qualified photographer, specializes in many areas, including retouching and image editing.

He is accomplished in photo journalism, event photography, public relations, commercial and artistic - he has a large selection of local landscape photos.

Mabo has paintings in many private collections and galleries - he paints abstracts in many styles, mostly expressionism.

Photographer Sascha Duentsch and artist Brita Housez join them for an art show and sale open daily at the winery from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. until Dec. 19.

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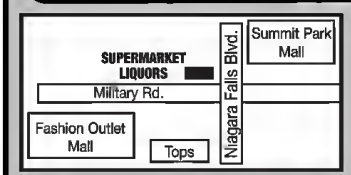

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Festival showcases beer

Maryanne Firth
Postmedia Network

With every compliment that poured in, Kat Goodale felt a sense of vindication.

As she handed over glass after glass filled with her signature recipe, her life decisions were reaffirmed.

The only woman in her 17-student brewmaster and brewery operations management class at Niagara College knew she had risked a lot to follow her dreams.

And now, at 53, it appeared her hunch that she had a knack for brewing has paid off.

Goodale — a name she quips is fitting for the industry — had a steady lineup of patrons waiting to taste her chai-spiced winter warmer at the college's Project Brew craft beer festival Saturday.

The tea-flavoured creation earned rave reviews from samplers, who could be heard talking about Kat's Nine Lives in the crowd.

"If I think about it too much, I get teary-eyed," Goodale said of the positive feedback.

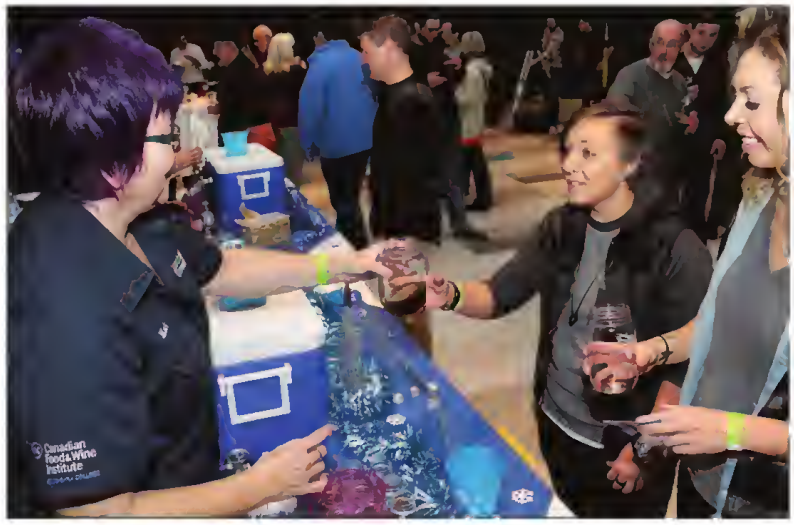
"It just tells me I made the right choice."

The former Toronto high school teacher took a leap a faith and opted for a career change two years ago to pursue her passion for beer.

"This just proves you're never too old to make that change," she said.

Hundreds of people attended the Project Brew showcase and had the opportunity to vote for their favourites among the 17 beers individually designed and brewed — from recipe to finished product — by graduating brewmaster students.

In addition to crafting the drinks, the class was also tasked with organizing the event in order to learn about sales and marketing aspects of the industry.



Kat Goodale, a student in Niagara College's brewmaster and brewery operations management program, speaks with Morgan Kempf and Jenn Minchin during Project Brew, the craft beer festival at the college Saturday.

James Clark, who took on the role as festival chair, called it valuable experience to have people taste and provide feedback on each carefully-developed recipe.

Through the program, students are typically "divorced from the later end of the process," when the product is consumed, he said.

See Page 27

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Brewmaster program bringing success to Niagara College

From Page 26

"We brew it, it goes out and the door and you usually never see it again. It's great to be here to see everything come together."

Clark, who created an oatmeal milk stout with roasted coffee and chocolate flavours, was impressed by the selection of unique beers crafted by his classmates. Enough of each was created to stock the teaching brewery's retail store for the next few weeks, he said.

For frequent store visitors Marek Kasowski and Hilary Murray, that was good news. The pair stopped at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus Saturday hoping to try something new — and what they found did not disappoint.

"There were a few good bitters" [illegible] interesting flavours.

The St. Catharines resident felt the festival offered insight into the direction the craft beer industry is headed, with certain spices and types of beer taking the lead.

Murray, who was attending the college when the brewmaster program first started four years ago, said she's impressed to see the strides it has made and the success it has brought the school.

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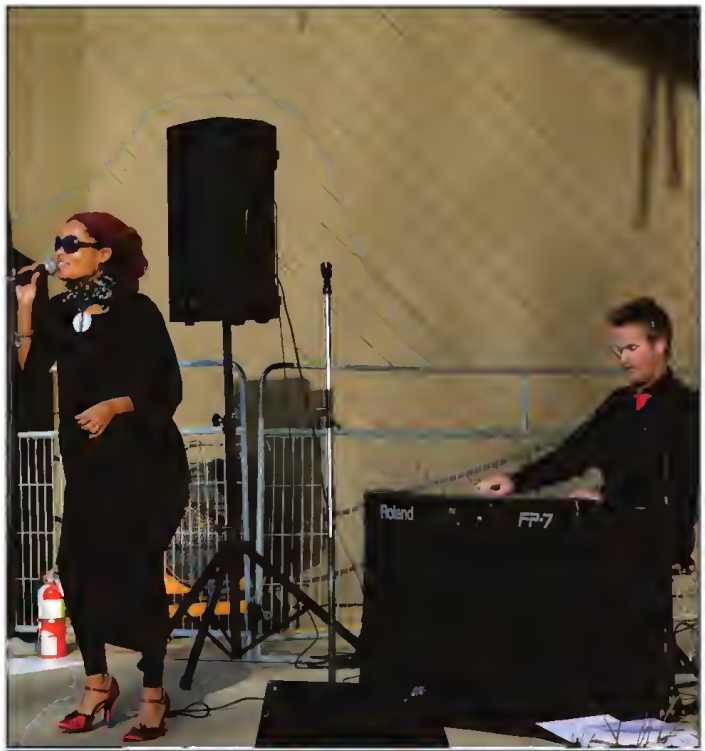
Juliet Dunn and Peter Shea appeared at Simcoe Park for the first in a series of three Saturday afternoon Sounds of Christmas concerts. Dunn and Shea of the Niagara Jazz Festival are offering the concert series in conjunction with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake - bring chairs, blankets and hot chocolate. Admission is free. Fred Mercnik/Special to the Advance



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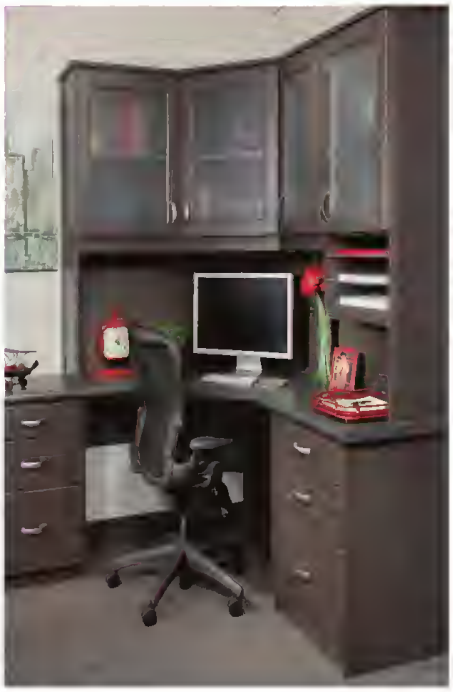

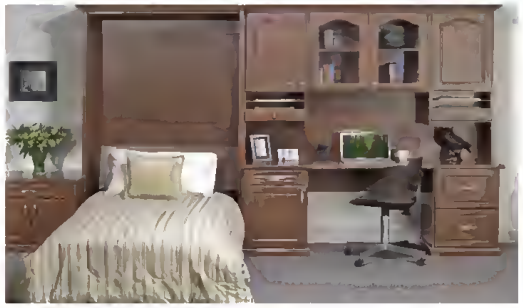

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Flat Broke performed Saturday in the bandshell in Simcoe Park for the first in a series of three Saturday afternoon Sounds of Christmas concerts. This Saturday, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., the Sarah Jerrom Quartet and the Mike Mirand Quartet will perform, with a Tribute to Frank Sinatra - Dec. 12 would have been his birthday. Bring chairs, blankets and hot chocolate - admission is free. Fred Mercnik/Special to the Advance

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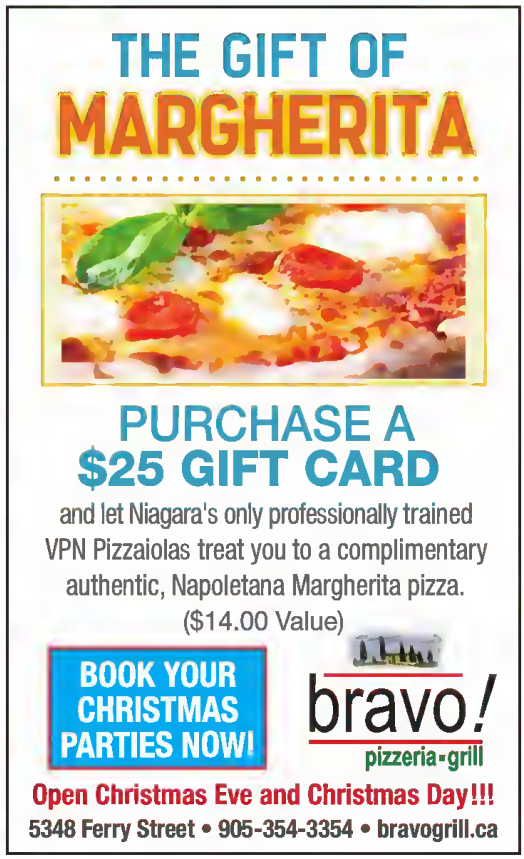
The Niagara Star Singers rehearse at the St. Davids–Queenston United Church for their Christmas showcase. A Jingle Bell Christmas, Sunday at 6 p.m. at Silver Spire Church in St. Catharines. The show choir is made up of 14 singing, dancing and acting performers from across the region, directed by Lisa Brillon. Tickets for the St. Paul Street church event are $15 each and are available by emailing niagarasingers@gmail.com. Net proceeds will go to the group's New York City workshop trip in May. Unwrapped toys will also be accepted at the event for Community Care. Julie Jocsak/ Postmedia Network



InfoHealth discusses screening for women's cancer

Randy Klaassen
Special to the Advance

Screening for diseases that affect people's lives in a big way is important, medical student Clara Sellars told the audience at the last InfoHealth session at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

She and fellow medical student Laura Chatsworth of McMaster University's Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine, Niagara Campus, spoke on women's cancer screening.

"It's important for women to understand the importance of screening; the earlier a cancer is detected the better treatment options are for survival," she said. "Tests need to be inexpensive, accessible and good at detecting the signs."

"Patients sometimes have questions about the value of screening," Chatsworth said. "Screening focuses on diseases that can be caught, and treated the best. This leads to better survival rates, better quality of life, easier courses of treatment, lower costs to health care, having peace of mind, staying informed, empowered and in control of your own health."

Chatsworth also spoke of the negatives of screening patients have heard about - situations when a patient received a false positive, or a false negative.

She defined a "false positive" as if a doctor were to tell a man that he was pregnant, while a "false negative" would be similar to a doctor telling a woman with a swollen abdomen she was not pregnant.

"There are also situations when patients have received over-diagnosis, or over-treatment for a condition, or even faced risks of procedures for treatment. Yet these rare situations are outweighed by the benefits of screening."

The three most common cancers among Canadian women are breast, cervical and colorectal. Sellars said.

"Over 9,000 women will be diagnosed, of those 2,000 will die. This highlights the importance of screening."

While there are various factors that determine when screening should be done, conversation with your doctor, about your medical history, is best to determine your situation.

"While self-examination related to breast cancer has been recommended in the past, studies have shown that mammography is really the best way to detect it."

Sellars continued, "When it comes to cervical cancer it's important to know that there are early warning signs. Given that there are high quality screening programs available, women 21 years and older should be screened every three years, and if there have been normal tests this can end at age 70."

"The third most common cancer diagnosed among women in Canada is colorectal" said Chatsworth.

"One of the reasons we need to be talking about this is that colorectal cancer is preventable and highly treatable when it is caught early."

There are two approaches for screening; the fecal occult blood test (every two years beginning at age 50), or a colonoscopy (every 10 years). Like other diseases family history is important to discuss with your doctor, she said.

Sellars and Chatsworth were supervised by Dr. Valerie Bailey, a family physician in St. Catharines.

You can see the entire InfoHealth presentation on Cogeco TV, Fridays at 6 p.m, and Saturdays at 11 a.m. Each lecture is re-broadcast for four weeks following each talk, and then available for six months through Cogeco's On-Demand service.

Medical students Clara Sellers and Laurel Charlesworth presented the lecture on screening for women's cancer, supervised by Dr. Valerie Bailey.

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Major bantam girls win season opener against Hamilton at home 46–42

Olivia Krieger goes hard for the ball against a Transway player in the major bantam girls Rangers season opener, which the Rangers won 46–42.

On a day of season openers for the Meridian Credit Union Rangers basketball teams, the Grade 8 major bantam girls came away winners from their recent home opener, played at Crossroads Public School.

Coached by Jennifer Caughill and Sue Sentance, the girls won 46-42 against Hamilton's Transway team.

The Rangers came out strong and were up by 20 in the first half, but a slower-paced second half of the game saw Transway claw its way back and come within four points of the Rangers win.

The Grade 5 atom boys, coached by Eric Weinert, worked hard against the St. Catharines Rebels but were on the short end of a 44-22 score.

The continued focus of the Meridian Credit Union Rangers program was on display as the boys continue to improve their personal skill levels and team skills.

The Grade 6 major atom boys, coached by Red Klassen, faced the Pelham Panthers for a 48-44 win in a hard fought battle.

Defence was great which led to a fast-paced offence.

The Rangers jumped out to a quick lead but with one quarter to go in the game found themselves behind. Continued hard work and tenacious defence put them back on top for the win.

The day included Genille Kroeker leading 40 Grades 1 to 4 children in skills and drills for the development program. While the development group will continue its Saturday morning skill training throughout the season, the Rangers will see its four teams head into a busy tournament season as well.

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NOTL Skating Club members competed in the recent 2015 competition in Barrie, the last for the club's competitive skaters leading into the season's annual Skate Canada Western Ontario Championships. The results are as follows: Pre-Novice Women: Audrey Morrison-3rd, Kyra Marotta-9th; Pre-Juvenile Women U13: Avery Royer-5th, Marin McLaughlin-7th, Zoe Abraham-10th, Rachael Hunter-10th; Pre-Juvenile Women U11: Cameron Kipp-9th; Novice Women: Natalie Li-11th, Annelise Perron-15th.

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www.stmarks1792.com

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(P.A.O.C.)
1665 Four Mile Creek Road
905-468-8971
December 13th • 10:30 am
Guest Speaker
www.gatewaycc.ca:
Check here for events and podcasts.

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www.orchardparkbiblechurch.org
434 Hunter Rd.
905-468-5731
Sunday, December 13th
9:30 am - Sunday school for ages 4 - 17
9:45 am - Adult Prayer Time
10:45 am - Worship Service ~ Message by: Dave Jackson
"Making Christmas Special"
Luke 1:26-38
A Christmas Musical - Dec. 20th - 3 pm

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Christmas Dynasty: God and the Mess
Family Christmas Eve Service
December 24 @ 6:30pm
Pastor Greg Alderton
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life abundant niagara
Pastor Rick Mills
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905 688 3958
Sunday, December 13th
current series
Unto Us A Child Is Born
Message: Mighty God
Guest Speaker: Wayne Dalgleish
9:30AM coffee 10:30AM worship
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Public Notices

WANTED! WITNESS
to an accident on **Nov. 28, 2015** around 5:15 pm at the intersection of York Road, Niagara Stone Road and Taylor Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Please email: djanis5@live.com or please call 905-262-5179.

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Obituaries

COLLARD, Ella May – It is with sadness that the family of Ella May Gilbert Collard announce her peaceful passing at Chateau Gardens on Monday, November 30, 2015 in her 95th year. She will be lovingly remembered by her children, Judy and Fred Evans, Karen Marsh and Jim and Pat Collard. She will be sadly remembered by her grandchildren, Mark and Kristy Evans, Craig and Leanne Evans, Maria and Ron Neufeld, Michael Marsh, Curtis Collard and Laura Collard. Ella was Great Nana to 12 great grandchildren, Jake, Brittany, Ben and Eryn Evans, David, Drake and Mylee Evans, Daniel, Christopher and Angelica Neufeld, Adele and Sydney Marsh. She also has one great-great grandson, Darwin Neufeld. Ella has one niece, Carol Pringle, and two nephews Rick Collard and Paul Collard. Ella was predeceased by her parents Henry and Kate Gilbert, her sister Kathleen Kane, her granddaughter Sarah Marsh, her nephew, Bob Collard and her great nephew Bobby Collard. Ella was born in Niagara Falls on May 12, 1921. When she graduated from Stamford Collegiate at 16, she was too young to become a nurse as she wanted, so she became a secretary at Bright's Canning Factory. Shortly after that she met the love of her life J. Curtis Collard and began their journey of working and playing together. While he was away in the Navy, she helped run Collard's Red and White at the 5 corners in Stamford Centre and then continued to help him while raising their children. When Curt retired from the grocery business, they then ran Lions International Canadian Supply Office together. They had been married 44 years when Curtis passed away in 1984. Ella enjoyed travelling, winters in Florida, reading and playing bridge. Ella was a Girl Guide Leader in Stamford, a Member of the Stamford IODE and Lioness. She and Curt were also members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Supper Club. The family would like to thank Dr. Andrew Smith and Dr. R. Brunner and the staff of Chateau Gardens, especially Tammy for making the last 5 years of Ella's life as comfortable as possible. Visitation and service have been held. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Mark's Church Historical Fund or the Alzheimer Society through **MORGAN FUNERAL HOME**, 415 Regent Street.

Rest in peace, Mom

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at **www.morganfuneral.com**

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MANSFIELD (CRABTREE), Irma Kathleen - With great sadness the family announces the passing of Irma Kathleen Mansfield (Crabtree) on Monday, November 30, 2015 at NHS - St. Catharines Site, in her 91st year. Beloved wife of David Mansfield for 71 years. Mother of Jerry (Sue), Jim (Fay) and the late Jeff (1991). Grandmother of Dan Mansfield, Rebecca Sheriff (Andrew), Gordon and Colin (Justine) Mansfield. Great grandmother of Dylan and Connor Sheriff. A memorial service will be held at **MORGAN FUNERAL HOME**, 415 Regent St. on Saturday, December 12, 2015 at 11 a.m., with a reception to follow. Immurement in Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Heart & Stroke Foundation. Memories, photos and condolences can be made at
www.morganfuneral.com

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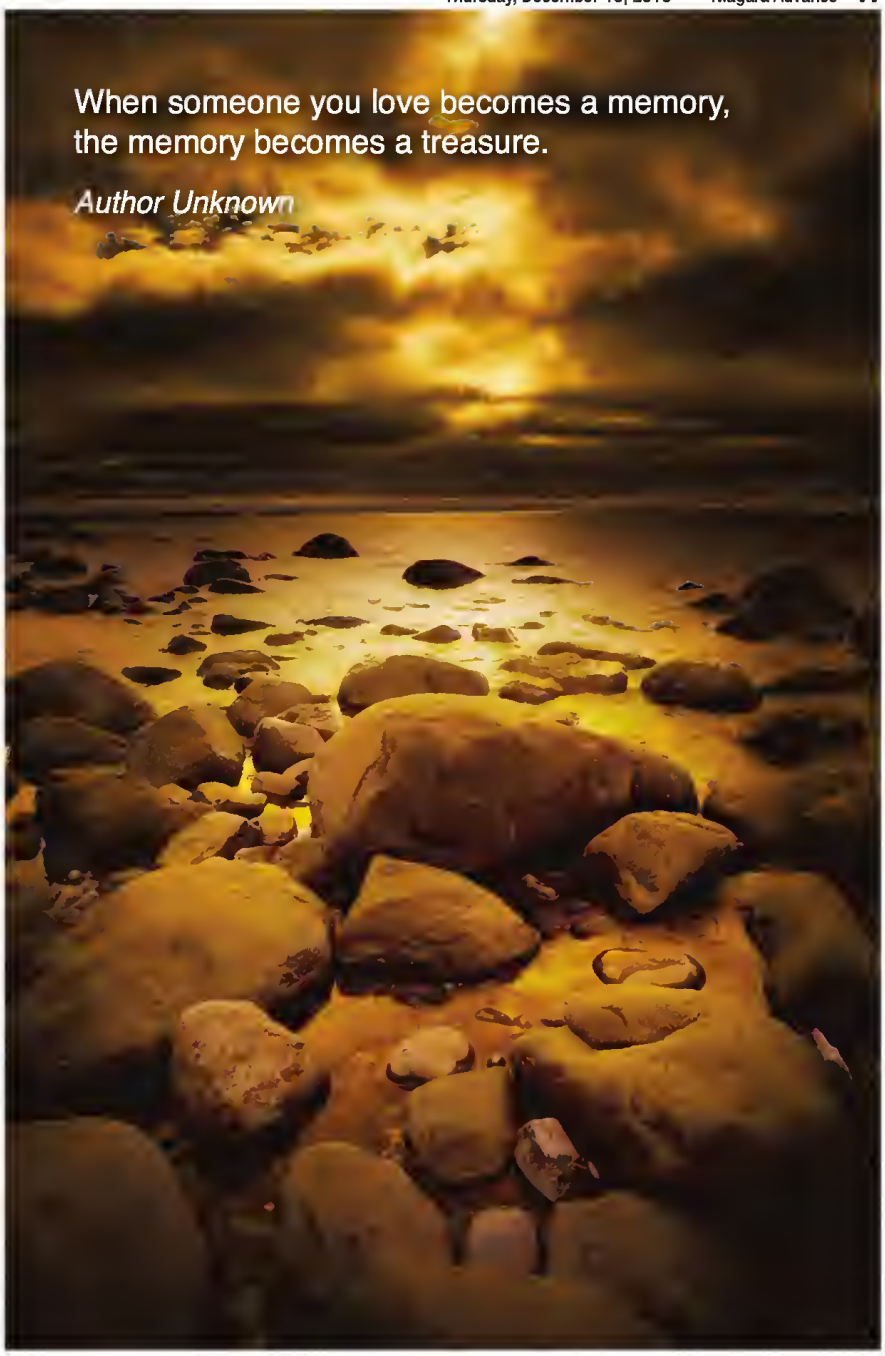

Those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved, still missed and very dear. - *Unknown*

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ADVANCE Notices

Last Fish Fry for 2015
Thurs., Dec. 17 ~ 4:30-7:30 pm
Resuming: Thurs., Jan. 7, 2016 ~ 4:30 - 7:30 pm
Thank you all for another successful year of Fish Fry Thursdays.
New Members Welcome
Royal Canadian Legion
Branch # 124, 410 King Street, NOTL

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ANY EVENT
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ALL WELCOME!
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KristlemasMarket @stratus
Sunday December 13
11 am to 5 pm
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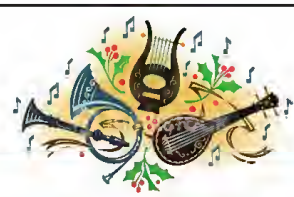
share_f@hotmail.com



Place your Coming Event / Community Calendar Social here, with or without a border, Colour, Graphics optional. Include your Logo!
Deadline: Monday 5 pm
Call Anna at 905-468-3283 ext 102

Tips on duplicate bridge

Max Rutherford
Special to the Advance

Max Rutherford, a member of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Duplicate Bridge Club, is providing a hand they have played recently with tips on how to play it.

Imagine you are West at a recent game at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Duplicate Bridge Club and reach a four heart contract with the following bidding:-

North	East	South	West
			1♥
1♥	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

North leads the J♣ and you have the following cards:-

West:
♠ Q 5 2
♥ K J 10 9 7 6
♦ K 5
♣ A 7

East:
♠ A 3
♥ A 4 2
♦ A 6 3
♣ 9 6 5 4 2

A quick analysis of the hands shows four possible losers as seen by the hand with the long trump suit (you) - two spades, the Q♥ and a club. You can take care of one spade loser by a ruff in dummy but from the bidding North has five or maybe six spades which means that South may have only two and can over-ruff. Ruffing with the A♥ will avoid this problem so you don't want to draw an early round of trump. You could try to finesse the Q♥ early but it's only a 50/50 chance and if it fails the defence can draw dummy's trumps before you're ready to ruff the losing spade.

The plan then, is to play two rounds of spades and ruff the third spade high, but how best to play the spades. The J♣ lead is a bit suspicious and could be a singleton so it's best to play the spades to put North on lead.

So you take the first trick with the A♣, play a low spade to the ace and then return a spade to the queen which is overtaken by North's King. North leads the 10♣ (it was a doubleton) which South overtakes and returns a club for North to ruff. As luck would have it you've been given a heart finesse so you ruff with the 9♥ on which North discards a spade. Now that you know that South has the Q♥ you ruff your final spade with the A♥ and finesse South for the Q♥ to make an over-trick.

As you bask in partner's praise you remember a time when you would just have drawn trump and trusted to the luck of a finesse rather than identifying your losers and coming up with a safe plan to make the contract.

Winners at duplicate bridge

Winners at the Dec. 1 NOTL Duplicate Bridge game at the community centre were:

North/South: 1st Claude and Muriel Tremblay; 2nd Alex and Voiula Maris; and 3rd Max Rutherford and Terry MacMillan.

East/West: 1st Jan Pavoni and Gene Ann Smith (65.25%); 2nd Vince and Elizabeth Sollazzo; and 3rd Bob Goodwin and Claire Bolsby.

Join club members on Tuesday afternoons, 1 p.m. at the community centre - for fun, to keep your brain active, or (just perhaps) to see your name among the winners.

2 WEEKS TO CHRISTMAS! HURRY IN NOW!

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